

VZCZCXRO8555  
PP RUEHFK RUEHKSO RUEHNAG RUEHNH  
DE RUEHKO #0762 0930804  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 030804Z APR 09  
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2049  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
RHHMHBA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI//N541// PRIORITY  
RHMFIUU/HQ PACAF HICKAM AFB HI//CC/PA// PRIORITY  
RUHBANB/OKINAWA FLD OFC US FORCES JAPAN CP BUTLER JA PRIORITY  
RHMFIUU/USFJ PRIORITY  
INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 3355  
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 5702  
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 1055  
RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 3897  
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 7151  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 8625  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 2792  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 4653  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 4494  
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS TOKYO 000762

SIPDIS

STATE FOR I/RF, PA/PR/FPC/W, IIP/G/EA, EAP/PD, R/MR,  
EAP/J, EAP/P, PM;  
USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;  
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;  
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;  
CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;  
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - POSSIBILITY OF  
PRESIDENT OBAMA VISITING JAPAN

¶1. The announcement from London that the President has accepted an invitation from President Hu to visit China later this year attracted considerable attention in Japan. Chief Cabinet Secretary Kawamura told the press on April 2 that coordination is under way for President Obama to visit Japan to coincide with his visit to China. The same day, public broadcaster NHK reported Kawamura's statement in its noon news and all evening papers ran front- and inside-page reports on it.

¶2. The moderate Yomiuri linked the idea of the President visiting Japan with his plans to attend the APEC leaders meeting to be held in Singapore in November. The business-oriented Nikkei ran the most in-depth coverage, speculating that the President will decide to visit both Japan and China to avoid the impression of "Japan passing," recalling Japanese sentiment when President Clinton skipped Japan while visiting China for nine days in 1998 and citing current Japanese anxiety about a "hollowing out" of the alliance over a projected DPRK missile launch. Citing a source connected to the USG, Nikkei reported that, although the timing is not yet determined, the President's trip to Japan is certain to take place after Japan's next general election, to strengthen bilateral ties under a new administration in Japan.

¶3. According to Nikkei's analysis, President Obama held his first summit with the Chinese leader in London and promised to visit China in order to "balance" the favorable treatment of Japan shown by Secretary Clinton's recent visit to Tokyo and Prime Minister Aso's visit to the White House. Nikkei reported that,

although it has not yet been decided whether Japan or China would be the first stop, the U.S. side assumes that Japan, even if it is not the first stop, is unlikely to think the U.S. is treating Japan lightly. In addition, the paper surmised that South Korea will be included in the trip.

ZUMWALT